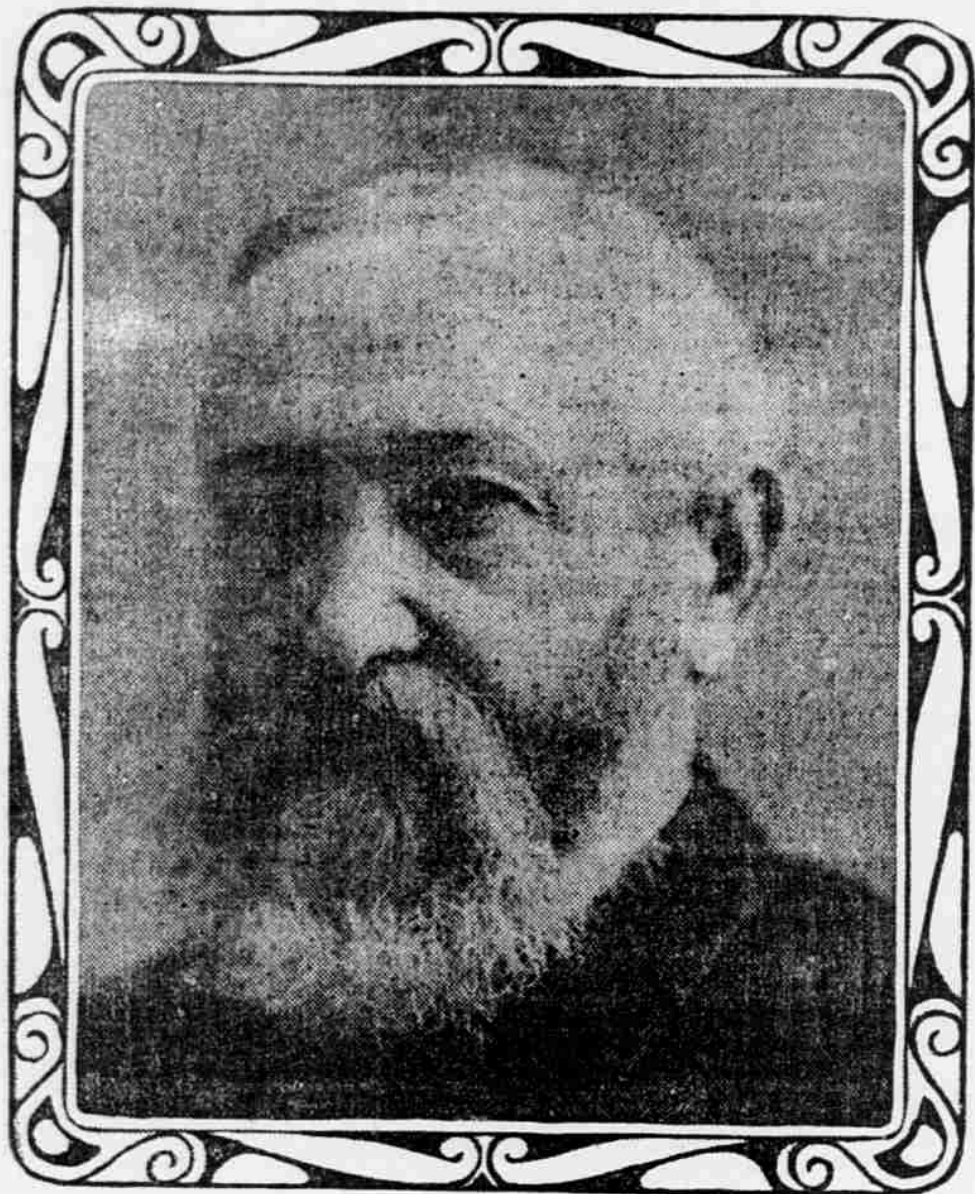


OUR PRESIDENTS



BENJAMIN HARRISON.

The twenty-third president of the United States was a grandson of William Henry Harrison, the ninth president. He was born at North Bend, O., in 1833 and settled in Indianapolis in 1854, becoming reporter of the supreme court of Indiana. During the civil war he served with signal bravery and ability, being brevetted brigadier general. In 1880 he was elected United States senator from Indiana. He was elected president in 1888 on the Republican ticket and was re-nominated four years later, but was defeated. After his retirement General Harrison practiced law in Indiana. He died March 13, 1901, at Indianapolis.

Red Saunders

By
HENRY WALLACE PHILLIPS.

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(CONTINUED FROM PAGE THREE)

"You drive over there for me and get some—just like this here—pickets and posts and whatever you call them long pieces, and I'll make it right with you."

"Yes, sir. How much will I get?"
"Oh, tell him to fill the wagon up with it, and I'll send back what I don't want. Hustle, now, like a good boy; I want to get shut of this job; I liked it better before I began."

When his Mercury had speeded on the journey at a faster gait than Red would have given him credit for the architect strode down to the blacksmith's shop. There was a larger crowd than usual around the forge, as the advent of the stranger had got into the wind, and the village Vulcan was a person who not only looked the whole world in the face, but no one of the maiden ladies of Fairfield could have excelled his interest in looking the whole world as much in the inside pocket as possible. The blacksmith was emphatically a man of gossip, as well as a hardworking, God-fearing man.

"Say, there he comes now, Mr. Tuttle!" cried one of the loungers, and nudged the smith to look.

"Well, let him come!" retorted the smith testily, jamming a shoe in the fire with unnecessary force; as a matter of fact he was embarrassed. The loungers huddled together for moral support as the big cowman loomed through the doorway.

"Good morning, friends!" said he.
"Good morning, sir!" replied the blacksmith, rubbing his hands on his apron. "Nice day, sir."

"For the sake of good fellowship I'll say 'yes' to that," responded Red, "but if you want my honest opinion on the subject it's d—n hot."

"Tis that," assented the smith, and a silence followed.

"Say, who's your crack fence builder around here," asked Red—"the man that can make two pickets grow where only one grew before and do it so easy that it's a pleasure to sit and look at him?"

"Hey?" inquired the smith, not precisely getting the meaning of the address.

"Why, I've got a fence to build," exclaimed Red, "and now I want some help—want it so bad I'll produce to the extent of three a day and call it a day from now till 6 o'clock. Any takers here? Make your bets while the little ball rolls."

The loungers understood the general drift of this and picked up their ears, as did the blacksmith. "Guess one of the boys will help you," said the latter.
"Well, who's it?" asked Red, glancing at the circle of faces. Three dollars a day was enormous wages in that part of the country. Nobody knew just what to say.

"Oh, well," cried Red, "let's everybody run! I reckon I can find something to do for the five of you. Are you with me?"

"Yes, sir," they said promptly.
"Can I borrow a hammer or so off you, old man?" questioned Red of the smith.

"Certainly, sir," returned the latter

heartily. "Take what you want."
"Much obliged. And the gate hinges are out of whack. Miss Saunders' place, you know. Come over and take a squint at 'em in the near by and by, will you? May as well fix it up all at once. Come on, boys!"

It was thus that the greatest enterprise that Fairfield had seen in many a day was undertaken. Miss Mattie was simply astounded as the army bore down upon the house.

"Whatever in the world is Cousin Will doing?" said she, but resting strong in the faith that it was necessarily all right she was content to wait for dinner and an explanation. Not so the postmistress. The agonies of unrequited curiosity the worthy woman suffered that morning until she at last summoned up her resolution and asked the smith plump out and out what it all meant would have to be experienced to be appreciated. And the smith kept her hanging for awhile, too, saying to himself in justification that it wasn't right the way that old gal had to get into everybody's business. The smith was like some of the rest of us—he could see through a beam if it was in his own eye.

CHAPTER VI.

THERE was a great din of whacking and hammering that morning. Red worked like a horse now, that he had company. A sudden thought struck him, and he went into the house.

"Mattie," said he.

"Well, Will?"
"I see a use for the rest of that nice big roast of beef I smell in the oven—let's have all these fellows stay to dinner and give 'em one good feed. What do you say?"

"Why, I'd like to, Will, but I don't know—where'll I set them?"

"Couple of boards outside for a table—let them sit on boxes or something. Got plates and things enough?"

"My, yes! Plenty of such things, Will."

"Then if it ain't too much trouble for you we'll let it go."

"No trouble at all, Will—it will be a regular picnic."

"Boys, you'll eat with me this day," said Red.

They spread the board table beneath an old apple tree and cleaned up for the repast in the kitchen shed with an apologetic "Sorry to trouble you, Miss Saunders," or such a matter as each went in.

Just as Miss Mattie was withdrawing the meat from the oven there came a knock at the door.

"Goodness, gracious!" she exclaimed. "Who can that be now? Will, will you see who that is? I can't go."

"Sure!" said Red and went to the door. There stood two women of that indefinite period between forty and sixty, very decently dressed and with some agitation visible in the way they fussy adjusted various parts of their attire.

They started at the sudden spectacle of the huge man who said pleasantly, "How der do, ladies?"

"Why, how do you do?" replied the taller instantly and in a voice she had never heard before. "I hope you're well, sir," a remark which filled her with surprise.

"Thanks, I'm able to assume the perpendicular, as you can see," responded Red, with a handsome smile of welcome. "How do you find yourself?"

"I'm pretty well," said the flustered lady. "How do you do?"

"Durned if we ain't right back where we started from," mourned Red to himself. "If it's one of the customs of this country saying 'how der do' an hour at a stretch, I pass it up." Aloud

he said: "Coming along fine. How's your father?" "Cuss me if I don't shift the cut a little anyhow," he added mentally.

"Why, he's very well indeed!" exclaimed the lady, with fervor. "How?" She got no further on the query, for the other woman interrupted in a tone of scandal. "Mary Ann Demilt, how can you talk like that? Your father's been dead this five year last August!"

The horror of the moment was broken by the appearance of Miss Mattie, crying hospitably on seeing the visitors. "Why, Mary and Pauline, how do you do?"

The shorter one, Pauline, looked up and said sharply, "We're well enough, Mattie." She was weary of the form. "Come right in," said Miss Mattie. "You're just in time for dinner."

There was a great protest at this. They "hadn't a moment to spare," they were "just going down to the corner and had stopped to say," etc.

"You've got to help me," said Miss Mattie. "Will here has invited the boys who are working for him to stay to dinner, and it won't be any more than Christian for you to help me out."

"Ladies," said Red, "if you don't want to starve a man who's deserving of a better fate take off your fixings and come out to dinner. No," he continued to their protests, which he observed were growing weaker, "it's no trouble at all. There's plenty for everybody. Come on, come on, this house shall fly clean off its base as soon as I! Now, for heaven's sake, ladies, it's all settled—come on!"

Whereat they laughed nervously and took off their hats.

It was a jolly dinner party. The young fellows Red had picked up in the blacksmith's shop were not the ordinary quality of loungers. They were boys of good country parentage, with a common school education, who unfortunately could find nothing to do but the occasional odd job. Of course it would not take long to transform them into common ne'er do wells, but now they were merely thoughtless boys.

The whole affair had an ad fresco flavor which stopped convention. The two women visitors pitched in and had as good a time as anybody.

In the middle of the festivities a young man walked past the front fence—a stranger evidently, for his clothes wore the cut of a city, and a cosmopolitan, up to date city at that. He stopped and looked at the house, hesitated a moment and then walked in, back to where the folk were eating. "Excuse me," said he as they looked up at him, "but isn't this Mr. Demilt's house?"

A momentary silence followed, as it was not clear whose turn it was to answer. Miss Mattie glanced around and, finding Red's eye on her, replied: "No, sir. Mr. Demilt's house is about a mile farther up the road."

"Dear me!" said the young man ruefully. He was a spick and span, intelligent looking man, with less of the dandy about him than the air of a man who had never worn anything but clothes of the proper trim and become quite used to it. Nevertheless the sweat stood out in drops on his forehead, for Fairfield's front "street" savored of a less moral region than it really was on a broiling summer day. The young man sighed frankly and wiped his head. "Well, that's too bad," he said. "I'm a stranger here—



"Foot of the table to Miss Mattie Saunders."

"Red Saunders' first glance liking of the stranger deepened as he told of his business. The cowman did not blame people who took obvious ways and dealt in ambiguities, for his experience in the world, which was pretty fairly complete, had told him that craft was a necessity for weak natures; nevertheless he cared not for those who used it.

In his part of the west a man would no more think of giving a false impression of his financial standing to alter his position in one's regard than he would wear corsees. Money was of small consequence; its sequelae of less. Men spoke openly of how much they made, how they liked the job, how their claims were paying. Such matters were neutral ground of chance conversation as the weather is in the east. The rapid and unpredictable changes of fortune gave a tendency to make light of one's present condition. A man would say "I'm busted" without any more feeling than he would say "I have a cold." Now, in Fairfield, that is not likely lonesome in that respect, one of the principal objects in life was to conceal the poverty which would persist in sticking its gaunt elbows through the cloth of words spread over it. Red asked straightforward questions—shrewd ones, too—seeing that the other was one of his own kind and would not resent it.

Lettis wanted nothing better than a chance to expand on the subject. It was close to his heart. He had been a subordinate about as long as a proud and masterful young fellow ought to be. Now he was quivering to try his own strength, and, seeing, for his part, that his host was inspired with a genuine interest and not curiosity, he gave him all the information in his power.

"But a plant like that is going to cost some money, ain't it?" asked Red. "Too much for me, I'm afraid," replied Lettis. "I have \$5,000 to put in, and I suppose I could borrow the rest, but that's saddling the business with too heavy charges right in the beginning. Still, it may not be as bad as I fancy."

Red drummed on the table, thinking. "I wouldn't mind getting into a business of some kind as long as it was making things," he said. "I don't hanker to keep store much. Suppose I go along with you when you look up how much straw is raised and the rest of it?"

"Would you?" cried the young fellow eagerly. "By George, sir, I wish you could see your way clear to take hold of it! Could you stand \$10,000, for instance? Excuse the question, but I'm so anxious over this—"

"Lord, what's the harm of asking

"but I'll chance it on the red."

Somehow he felt instantly at home and at ease; it was a quality that Red Saunders dispersed wherever he went.

"There you are, sir," said Red, forwarding a plate full of jelly meat. "The ladies will supply the decorations."

"Do you like rice as a vegetable, sir?" inquired Miss Mattie.

"No, he doesn't," interrupted Red. "He likes it as an animal. Never saw any one who looked less like a vegetable than our friend." The young man's laugh rang out above the others.

Poor Miss Mattie was confused. "It's too bad of you, Will, to put such a meaning on my words," she said.

"The strange part of it is," spoke the young man, seeing an opportunity for a joke and to deal courteously with his entertainers at the same time—"the peculiar fact is that my name is Lettis."

"Lettuce?" cried Red. "Mattie, I apologize—he is a vegetable."

At which they all laughed again.

"And now," said Red, "I'm Red Saunders, late of the Chanta Seechee ranch, territory of Dakota—state of North Dakota, I mean. Can't get used to the state business. There's a Bill and a Dick on this side of me and two Johns and a Sammy on the other. Foot of the table is Miss Mattie Saunders, next to her—just as they run—Miss Pauline Doolittle and Miss Mary Ann Demilt, who may be kin to the gentleman you're seeking."

"Mr. Thomas F. Demilt?" asked the stranger.

"He's my sister," responded Miss Mary Ann. Whereat the youths buried their faces in the plates, as Mr. Thomas F., in spite of many excellent qualities, bore a pathetic resemblance to the title.

"I mean," continued the lady hurriedly, "that I'm his brother."

"By Jiminy, ma'am," exclaimed Red, "but yours is a strange family!"

"What Miss Demilt wishes to say," cut in Miss Doolittle, with some asperity, "is that Mr. Thomas Faulkenstone Demilt is her brother." She did not add, as extreme candor would have urged, "And I have some hope—remote, alas, but there—of becoming sister to Miss Demilt myself."

"Thank you!" said Lettis. "Shall I be able to see him this afternoon?"

"Oh, mercy, yes!" said Miss Mary Ann. "Tom is home all day."

"I can thank the kind fates for that," said Lettis. "I had begun to think he was a myth," and he fell in upon the tender meat with a vigorous appetite of youth and a good digestion.

Nathaniel Lettis was by no means a fool, and he had experience in business, but the mainspring of the young fellow was frankness, and in the course of the dinner he told his errand. Mr. Demilt had written to his firm explaining the advantages of starting a strawboard factory in Fairfield. It was too small a thing for the firm to be interested in, but Lettis had a small capital which he wished to invest in an enterprise of his own handling, and it had struck him that there might be a chance for independence; therefore he had come to find out the lay of the land.

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NOTICE.

Defendants, the unknown heirs, devisees and legatees of Sarah J. Cooley, deceased, will take notice that, on the 18th day of December, 1907, Wilson Glover plaintiff filed his petition in the district court of Red Willow county, Nebraska, against you, the object and prayer of which are to obtain a decree of this court in favor of plaintiff and against said defendants quieting his title in and to the south half of the north east quarter and the north half of the south east quarter of section fifteen, township two, north of range twenty-nine, west of the sixth principal meridian in said county, against the claims and demands of defendants and each of them; that the cloud cast upon plaintiff's title by the claims of defendants and each of them be removed and each of them be decreed to have no title in or to said land, but that the same be decreed to be in the plaintiff discharged of all the claims or demands in law or in equity of defendants or any of them, for costs and for general relief and that on the 18th day of December, 1907, said court ordered that service be made upon you by publication. You are required to answer said petition on or before the twenty-seventh day of January, 1908.

Dated December 19, 1907.—12-29-07.
WILSON GLOVER, Plaintiff.
By W. S. Moran, his attorney.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS.

The State of Nebraska, Red Willow county, ss. In the county court. In the matter of the estate of Sarah J. Cooley, deceased.
To the creditors of said estate: You are hereby notified that I will sit at the county court room in McCook in said county, on the 20th day of June, 1908, at one o'clock p. m., to examine all claims against said estate, with a view to their adjustment and allowance. The time limited for the presentation of claims against said estate is six months from the 14th day of December A. D. 1907, and the time limited for payment of debts is one year from said 14th day of December, 1907.

Witness my hand and the seal of said county court, this 14th day of December, 1907.

J. C. Moore, County Judge.

Boyle & Eldred, Attorneys.—12-29-07.

Only two worthful items enter into the value of advertising, namely, quantity and quality,—that is how many and how good. The McCook TRIBUNE is in a field by itself, locally, on these two points. We challenge and invite inspection and comparison. We can give you from two to three times the value for your money that any other Red Willow county publication can offer you.

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